

Discussion Focuses on the Need for Increased Workforce Development

LA PLATA, MD – Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-5) hosted local businesses and representatives from the College of Southern Maryland for an event highlighting the Hoyer-sponsored Job Opportunities Between our Shores (JOBS) Act and the Make It In America agenda.

“I was pleased to join local manufacturers, business leaders, and educators today for a very productive discussion on how we can best meet the employment needs of local manufacturers and how the Make It In America agenda and JOBS Act would be helpful to future success and local economic growth,” **stated Congressman Hoyer**. “However, one of the main issues we addressed today is how that success will not be reached in America without developing the most talented, educated, and prepared workforce in the world. To meet this goal of a strongly educated workforce, we need to train the next generation of workers for jobs that will require an even greater understanding of technology, higher levels of mathematics and principles of engineering.”

Hoyer recently introduced the JOBS Act, which would support educational partnerships between community colleges and advanced manufacturing firms so workers can attain the skills they need to earn more money and meet the needs of the company. It also works to ensure that advanced manufacturing firms can grow and expand as they hire new, trained workers. By prioritizing dislocated workers and unemployed individuals, as well as workers in need of retraining, the JOBS Act aims to advance individuals' careers and ensure higher earnings.

Today's discussion included remarks from Robert Kavetsky of Energetics Technology Center ([ETC](#)), who talked about the state of advanced manufacturing technology jobs in the region and how we can develop more opportunities for high-paying careers within this sector; several local employers discussed the types of skills they seek in potential employees so that their companies can be productive and profitable; a College of Southern Maryland graduate shared his positive experience of returning to school to re-train in order to advance his career in the manufacturing sector; and finally, the group heard from Gabe Castleberry who runs the Potomac Workforce Education and Recruitment ([PoWER](#)) Center for veterans with disabilities, which helps wounded warriors train for positions in advanced manufacturing through area defense contractors.

Earlier today, Congressman Hoyer also met with local Chamber Chairs and CEOs for a meeting in recognition of Small Business Week, where he discussed the Make It In America agenda, small business initiatives, and listened to the local issues of concern to the business community, including workforce development and the importance of education.

“I continue to hear from small business owners in the district that they cannot get access to credit, so today’s session was part of a continuing conversation on how we can address those challenges,” **continued Hoyer**. “Make It In America is a main focus of House Democrats, and it includes several bills targeted at helping small businesses, including the reauthorization of the Small Business Innovation Research program, a bill to establish tax-preferred savings accounts for small business start-ups, and increased focus on workforce development. Today’s meetings were very productive, and I look forward to continuing to hold these types of discussions with the Fifth District business community.”